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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

BEFORE THE

HOUSE PERMANENT INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

SIERRA VISTA, ARIZONA

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Good morning/afternoon, distinguished Members of the Committee. My name is James Woosley, and I am the Director of the Southwest Field Intelligence Unit, a regional component of the Office of Intelligence within U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I am pleased to be here today to share with you how ICE Intelligence, and specifically the men and women of the ICE Southwest Field Intelligence Unit (SWFIU) and South Central Field Intelligence Unit (SCFIU), apply their intelligence gathering skills and abilities to safeguard the American people and our borders. With unique immigration and customs authorities and intelligence tools, ICE Intelligence has significant detection, collection, and analysis capabilities that support investigative and enforcement missions conducted by ICE and our federal, state and local partners.

The work we do is an important contribution to the Administration's overall strategy of enacting comprehensive immigration reform to effectively secure our borders. The President has called for a comprehensive reform of the nation's immigration system that provides additional resources for border security, establishes a robust interior enforcement program, creates a temporary worker program, and addresses the problem of the estimated 11 to 12 million illegal immigrants already in the country.

The SWFIU and SCFIU are two of six ICE Field Intelligence Units (FIU). The remaining four are located in New York, Long Beach, Chicago, and Miami. FIUs provide intelligence expertise to investigative offices and detention facilities in the field, and play an integral role in safeguarding the southwest border. The SWFIU was established in 2003 shortly after the formation of DHS and ICE. It currently consists of a Director's Office in Tucson, Arizona and Sub-Offices in Phoenix, San Diego, and El Paso. The SWFIU area of responsibility includes most of the southwest border from San Diego, California to El Paso, Texas, as well as Mexico. The SCFIU in Houston, Texas, is

responsible for a six-state area that includes the 1,254-mile border between Texas and Mexico, as well as Central America.

These FIUs are located in regions known for a high level of immigration-related criminal activity and associated violence. However, the SWFIU and SCFIU have developed sophisticated border security measures and through day-to-day intelligence collection, innovative programs, and operational support, routinely identify and interdict border-related criminal activity that threatens American security. This is especially true when addressing the substantial volume of illegal aliens that pass through the Arizona corridor, including Other than Mexicans (OTMs), the border violence in the Laredo, Texas area, and attempted smuggling of Special Interest Aliens (SIAs) along the entire southwest border. Both FIUs work jointly to address these issues and share intelligence information on the trends and patterns that develop as result of increased enforcement actions in any specific smuggling corridor.

Through the design and launch of innovative intelligence programs such as Operation Last Call, ICE's Office of Intelligence continues to make important contributions to the Department's intelligence program and to provide actionable knowledge. Last Call is a highly effective operation that collects, evaluates, analyzes, and disseminates information derived from hundreds of thousands of individuals who enter our detention and removal system annually. Customers for Operation Last Call intelligence include ICE operational units, DHS Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), the Intelligence Community, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and other federal agencies. This program focuses on relevant collection in the areas of force protection, anti-terrorism, illegal export of strategic arms and technology, on-going criminal enterprises, human trafficking and smuggling, contraband smuggling (weapons of mass destruction, drugs, etc.), threats to critical infrastructure, and the movement of money that supports illicit activities.

Another successful initiative began in March 2004, when ICE Intelligence and our DHS partner agencies in the southwest border area established an intelligence task force (ITF) to support a regional enforcement concept under the "Arizona Plan." This plan, designed to conduct joint and closely coordinated ICE and CBP regional intelligence and enforcement operations, became the Arizona Border Control Initiative (ABCI). ABCI was recognized as the first joint interdiction operation that encompassed the combined enforcement resources of all DHS agencies in Arizona. This intelligence task force marks the first time in DHS history that regional DHS components were linked operationally in a way that maximized the impact of our enforcement capabilities in the region.

On a yearly basis, ICE Intelligence compiles both a comprehensive, statewide Arizona threat assessment and a more wide-ranging Southwest Border Threat Assessment. The foundation of this assessment is not only empirical data, but also the direct face-to-face input of 45 local, state, and federal agencies whose primary mission is to protect the Homeland. This was the first ICE threat assessment with such widespread scope and unique methodology, and it established the operational baseline for future DHS enforcement operations. It was later utilized as the model for Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST) threat assessments.

ICE Intelligence currently provides support to the BEST Tucson and BEST Laredo operations, which are multi-disciplined task forces that conduct intelligence-driven investigations of various crimes occurring in and around the Laredo and Tucson areas. A DHS-inspired initiative, BEST responds aggressively to the increase in violence along the southwest border.

In addition to Operation Last Call and our work in support of the BEST, the SWFIU and SCFIU work in conjunction with ICE Headquarters Intelligence and DHS Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) on the Intelligence Campaign Plan (ICP), a border-wide security

effort aimed at more efficient consolidation of relevant field-generated information and resources.

Collectively, we always look for new ways to support and to respond to the ever-expanding responsibilities and needs of ICE, DHS, and the Intelligence Community (IC).

As you are aware, smuggling of all types – drugs, contraband, and human beings – is often the catalyst for the violence witnessed throughout Mexico and along the southwest border. Smuggling organizations recognize the importance of controlling the gateways to the United States. The violence in Nuevo Laredo and Matamoros, Mexico (near Laredo and Brownsville, Texas respectively) is a good example, and resulted directly from the struggle for control of these important gateways. The twin pressures of drug and alien smuggling consume many enforcement resources and require a robust response from law enforcement at all levels in the border area. ICE Intelligence is helping ICE and DHS to meet this challenge with its unique capabilities and breadth of experience.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the ways ICE Intelligence responds to these challenges is through the BEST in Laredo. ICE Intelligence produced the Laredo Threat Assessment in April 2006, and provided an overview of the challenges facing the intelligence and law enforcement community there. Information sharing and intelligence-driven leads continue to produce significant investigative targets, particularly smuggling organizations.

ICE Intelligence also works with the National Intelligence Community on the development of protocols leading to a more effective fusion of national intelligence with law enforcement information and intelligence in the post 9/11 environment.

These examples are all ongoing activities that produce valuable intelligence that protects our borders and supports the Department's Secure Border Initiative.

The development of intelligence-based enforcement operations is a complex task in the context of the southwest border from Brownsville, Texas to San Diego, California. ICE Intelligence understands the interplay of legitimate trade and travel through the ports; the clandestine introduction of people and materials between the ports; money laundering activities carried out through bulk cash movements and commercial transactions; illegal exports; integrity issues on both sides of the border; and the potential for foreign operatives or terrorists to exploit any of these as cover for their movement, operations or attacks. We are working hard to protect our Nation's citizens, and recognize the important role that skillful intelligence collection and analysis plays in the national security and public safety mission of ICE and DHS.

Thank you for this opportunity to describe the activities of ICE Intelligence along the southwest border. On behalf of the men and women of ICE Intelligence and our agency, thank you for your continued support of our work. At all levels of this agency, we remain committed to working closely with our law enforcement and intelligence partners to safeguard the American people and our borders against those that seek to do us harm.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have at this time.